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JAZZ WORDS & MUSIC From the jazz fest to you, courtesy of bloggers Bernard Perusse, T'Cha Dunlevy, Adam Kinner, Natasha Hall, Jake Shenker, Juan Rodriguez, Irwin Block and more. montrealgazette.com/jazzfest2009

ARTS&LIFE

♦ THE GAZETTE | MONTREAL | THURSDAY, JULY 2, 2009 | EDITORS: ARTS, MARK TREMBLAY ■ LIFE, MICHAEL SHENKER | 514 987 2560
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Filmmakers had naked ambition

BILL BROWNSTEIN on streaking documentary

"(Jump) achieved fame/infamy by streaking the French Open finals."

Jimmy Jump's dream was to streak the highly anticipated Barcelona/Madrid soccer matchup in full view of 80,000 spectators in the latter Spanish metropolis. Dan Emery's dream – along with that of his co-directors Mathieu Waconeich and Jon Deitcher – was to bring the story of Jimmy Jump, along with those of other world-class streakers, to the screen.

Four years later, Emery and the guys have succeeded: Jump! The World's Greatest Streakers airs Saturday at 6 p.m. on the Documentary channel. The doc will soon air in other countries around the world.

No small task, either. The directors maxed out their credit cards, then had to rely on the kindness of friends and family to complete production of a film that took them around this continent and Europe. Though the budget was a relatively paltry $80,000, Jump! has the look of a doc with 10 times that cost.

"We kept pitching broadcasters every step of the way while we were making it," Emery says. "They loved the idea. They loved the concept of the streakers. But they wanted to see a finished product before committing."

Emery understood the dilemma. He and his co-directors were neophytes. "This was our proving ground as directors. We showed we could make good on our ideas and that we could make a professional film," he explains. "And we didn't let the fact that we had no money deter us."

Prove themselves they have. Jump! affords a fascinating insight into the minds of some of the world's greatest exhibitionists. It introduces us to Montreal-born Rob Bensimhon, who made a splash diving into the pool – wearing only a tutu – during the diving competition at the 1984 Olympic Games. Then there's the granddaddy of streakers, Mark Roberts, who has streaked his way through the world's greatest sports spectacles, including the Super Bowl.

But the focus of this doc is Jump, né Jaume Marquet, who most recently achieved fame/infamy by streaking the French Open finals and draping eventual winner Roger Federer in a Barcelona flag.

Unlike many streakers, who do the deed with the names of corporate institutions emblazoned on their chest, Jump doesn't do this for the cash. In fact, he earns his daily bread selling books door to door – apparently, he can be most persuasive.

Please see STREAK, Page D5

JAZZ FESTIVAL

JOHN KENNEY GAZETTE FILE PHOTO

Chris Botti plays during the Leonard Cohen tribute concert at last year's jazz festival. He'll have an orchestra with him tonight at Place des Arts.

CHRIS BOTTI prides himself on being a showman and is intent on recovering jazz's populist status – even if the critics don't always understand

Fanfare for the common man

JUAN RODRIGUEZ SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

Chris Botti is one of the most interesting anomalies in the jazz world: among the best-selling instrumentalists of all time (his albums have sold more than 10 million copies), he's often dismissed by critics, yet is respected by many musicians. He breaks the stereotype of jazzmen being taciturn, diffident and uncommunicative toward the general public. He describes himself as a showman and communicator, yet he never shies away from giving props to more "difficult" players.

"I've always positioned my concerts as being the sum of different parts. First, there's the trumpet playing. Second, I surround myself with incredible musicians who audiences would want to come see again. And last but not least is (fostering) the ability of an audience member to somehow try to grab hold of jazz. It's so much easier said than done, because while some say, 'Oh yeah, I really like jazz,' the reality is that most people don't understand the trajectory of a particular song. So I try my best to give audiences some kind of glimpse into the history or attitude of the song and make them feel that much more connected to what's going on."

Botti, 46, says that a part of him "grew up being a hard-core jazz fan – Miles Davis, from 1959 to 1966, that's really it for me."

But another part loves "sophisticated popular music, like Frank Sinatra, Sting, Peter Gabriel," and it's not difficult to see where the twain meet on stage.

"Sinatra didn't just come out and sing. There was some funny crack and showmanship. His concerts were more of an event, so audiences were in on something that wasn't going to happen the next night. That's one of the reasons why Michael Bublé is so successful. It's not just because he sings standards, but because he's also an interesting character on stage. I think that over the long term, that kind of stuff can help you show your individuality. You're relating a certain something that's different from the playing of jazz. The two go together to create a complete connection with an audience."

Please see BOTTI, Page D6
More jazz festival coverage, Pages D3, D4, D6

Ya gotta believe! Even the rain stops for Stevie

PHIL CARPENTER THE GAZETTE

Stevie Wonder performs at jazz fest on Tuesday night.

Wonder and daughter celebrate legacy of Jackson during blowout concert

MARK LEPAGE and JOHN GRIFFIN THE GAZETTE

If you believe in things that you don't understand, then you suffer ... so better to understand, then. Early Tuesday evening, under steady near-biblical rain, a sea of umbrellas gathered on the radically revamped jazz fest site north of Ste. Catherine St. And they knew why. And they believed.

Jazz fest organizers had spent literally 30 years working to make A Wonder's Summer Night happen. Naturally, this massive 30th anniversary Stevie Wonder blowout had to face its share of tests – did we mention it was raining? And that Michael Jackson died? And so, people were ready for a papal audience with a pop figure whose discography and world-embracing spirit would tend to inspire faith in something bigger. And then, at 9:35, the rain tailed off. So, you know, this "belief" thing ...

Almost 30 minutes later, as the lights went up, the umbrellas came down, and Stevland Morris and his daughter Aisha came out to "celebrate the legacy of Michael Jackson." He spoke of commemorating "his talent, his voice, his music" and keeping those alive forever. He name-checked John Lennon. He trashed the vampires who will descend on the estate, and advised everyone to "buy his music."

Please see WONDER, Page D3

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PODCASTS, VIDEOS, GALLERIES • To see a gallery of jazz fest photos so far, view a video of L'Actuel's opening night, listen to podcasts and more, go to our one-stop jazz fest page.

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